

What is claimed is:

1. An image processing method, comprising steps of:
obtaining input image information including input image data from an input device;
discriminating plural subjects existing in the input image data;
dividing the input image data into plural subject patterns corresponding to the discriminated plural subjects;
obtaining a relationship among the plural subject patterns;
determining a processing method for the input image data of the plural subject patterns on a basis of the relationship, and
processing the input image data of the plural subject patterns in accordance with the processing method so as to obtain output image data.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein as the processing method, a respective processing method is determined for each subject pattern based on respective relevant information regarding each subject pattern.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the respective relevant information regarding each subject pattern includes priority order information set for each subject.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the priority order information is set in accordance with a kind of each subject.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the priority order information includes a weighting value set in accordance with a degree of importance of each subject.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the dividing step is conducted by a pattern extracting process to extract the plural subject patterns from the input image data and the respective relevant information includes pattern information regarding each extracted subject pattern.

7. The method of claim 3, wherein the pattern information includes sub-priority order information set for each subject pattern in accordance with existence situation how each subject pattern exists in an image area of the input image data and the priority order information is corrected by the sub-priority order information.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the sub-priority order information is set in accordance with at least one of an occupation ratio of each subject pattern to the image area and a location of each subject pattern on the image area.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the plural subjects existing in the input image data are discriminated in accordance with scene attribution of the input image data.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the input image information includes the scene attribution as additional information.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the input device inputs the scene attribution of the input image data.

12. The method of claim 3, wherein the priority order information is set in accordance with the scene attribution of the input image data.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein when each subject pattern comprises plural unit patterns, the pattern extracting

process extracts the plural unit patterns and detects the existence situation of each subject pattern from connecting conditions among the plural unit patterns.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the pattern extracting process is conducted by the input device in such a way that the location of each of the plural unit patterns is inputted on a screen on which the input image data is indicated, and wherein the pattern extracting process obtains connecting relation information among all of the extracted plural unit patterns, determines the subject pattern information from the connecting relation information and extracts the plural subject patterns from the input image data on a basis of the subject pattern information.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the obtaining step selects a set of input image data from plural sets of input image data, the pattern extracting process obtains the subject pattern information including the connecting relation information from the selected set of input image data and the processing step conducts the image processing for the other sets of input image data by applying the subject pattern information to the other sets of input image data.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein the pattern extracting process extracts the plural subject pattern in relation to customer information.

17. An image processing apparatus, comprising:

- a first obtaining section for obtaining input image information including input image data from an input device;

- a discriminating section for discriminating plural subjects existing in the input image data;

- a dividing for dividing the input image data into plural subject patterns corresponding to the discriminated plural subjects;

- a second obtaining section for obtaining a relationship among the plural subject patterns;

- a determining section for determining a processing method for the input image data of the plural subject patterns on a basis of the relationship, and

- a processing section for processing the input image data of the plural subject patterns in accordance with the processing method so as to obtain output image data.

18. A computer program for conducting an image processing method, comprising steps of:

obtaining input image information including input image data from an input device;

discriminating plural subjects existing in the input image data;

dividing the input image data into plural subject patterns corresponding to the discriminated plural subjects;

obtaining a relationship among the plural subject patterns;

determining a processing method for the input image data of the plural subject patterns on a basis of the relationship, and

processing the input image data of the plural subject patterns in accordance with the processing method so as to obtain output image data.